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(54) **BACKLIGHT UNIT WITH EMISSION MODIFICATION**

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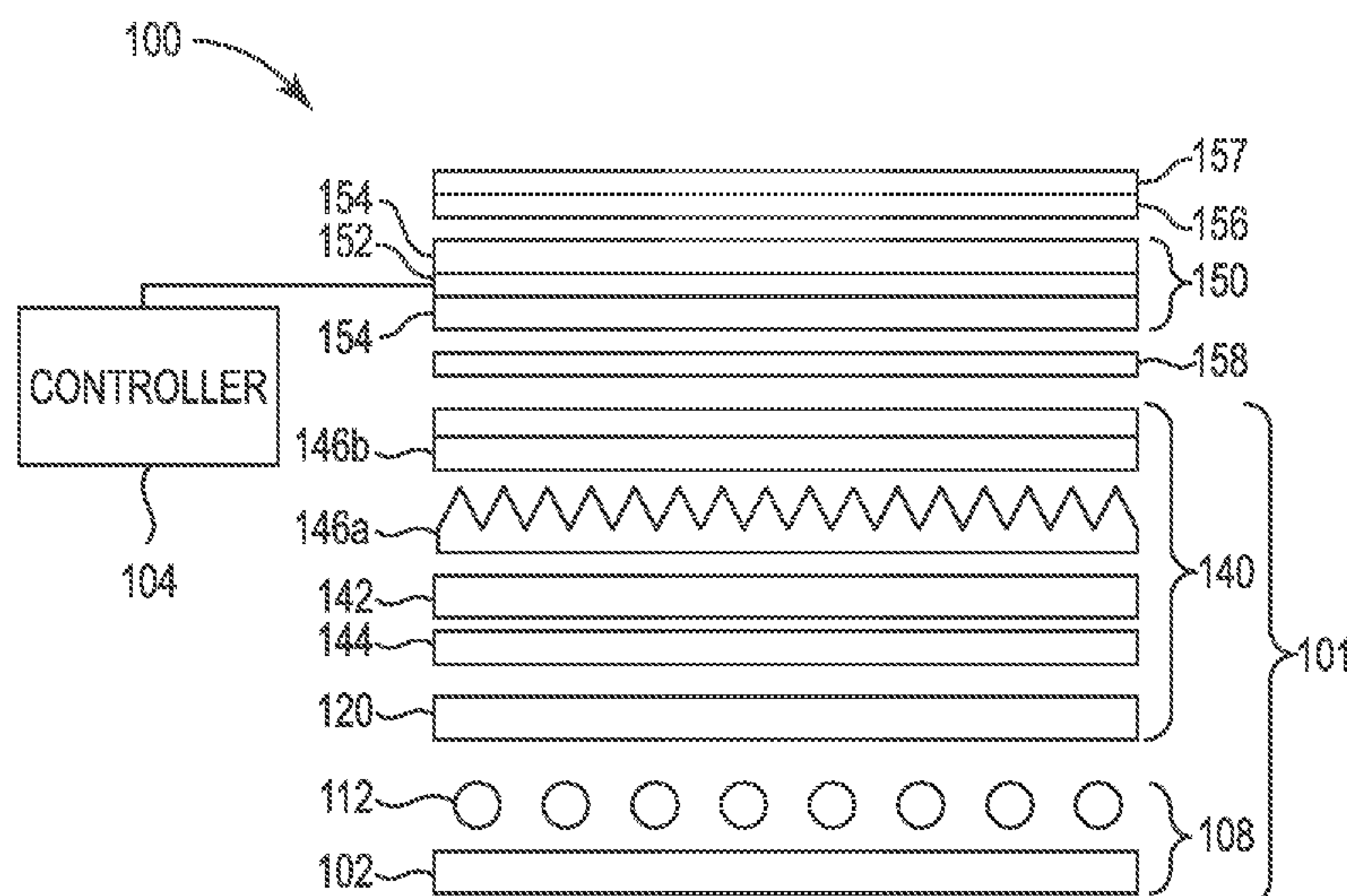
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A display device is disclosed that includes a backlight comprising light-emitting diodes. The disclosed display device includes a liquid crystal panel configured to control transmission of light from the backlight to a viewer. The display device also includes one or more optical films that incorporate one or more light conversion or light absorbing materials. The optical films can be positioned between the layers of the disclosed display device and give enhanced blue-light absorption to the display device.

12 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



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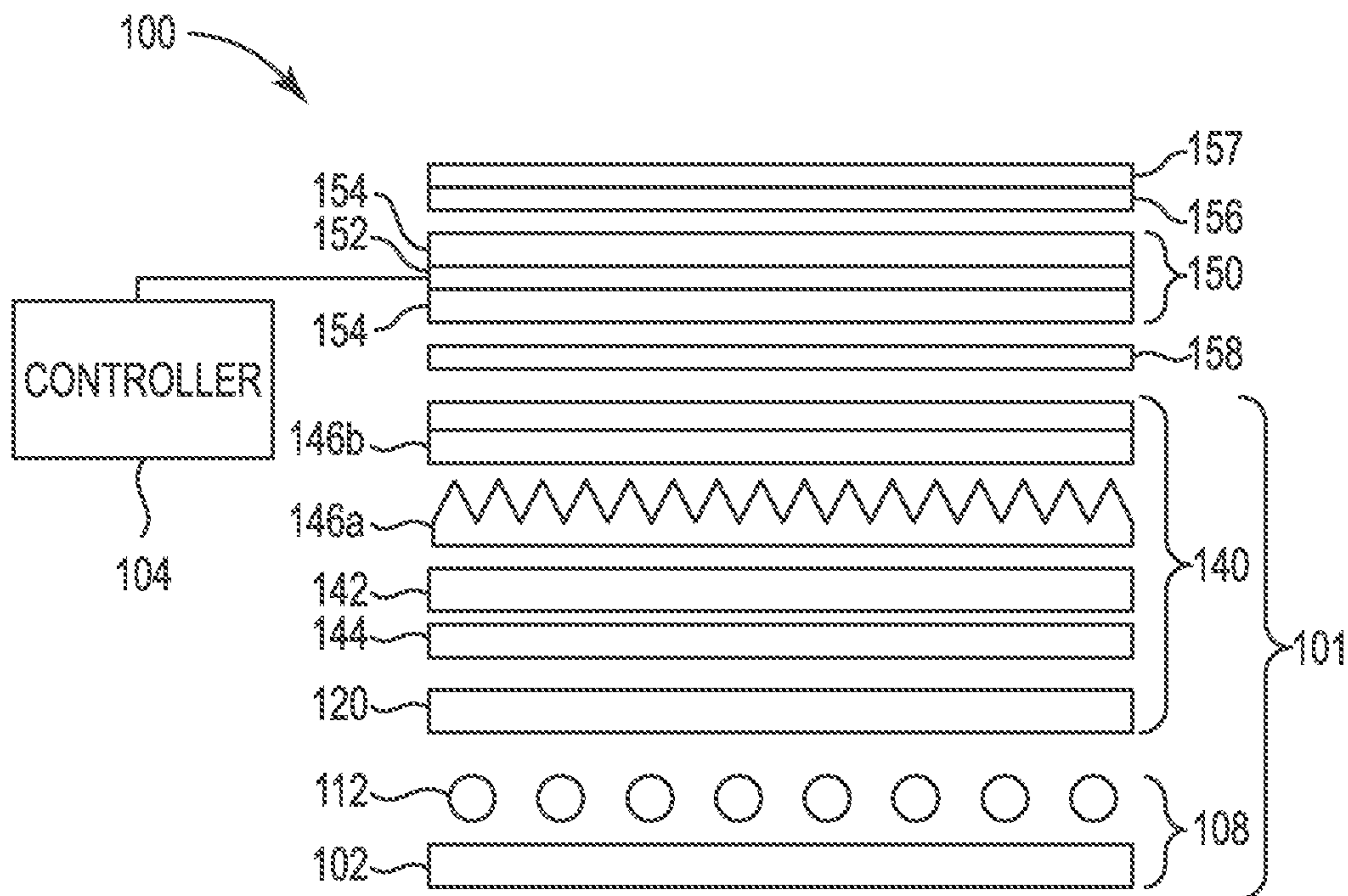


Fig. 1

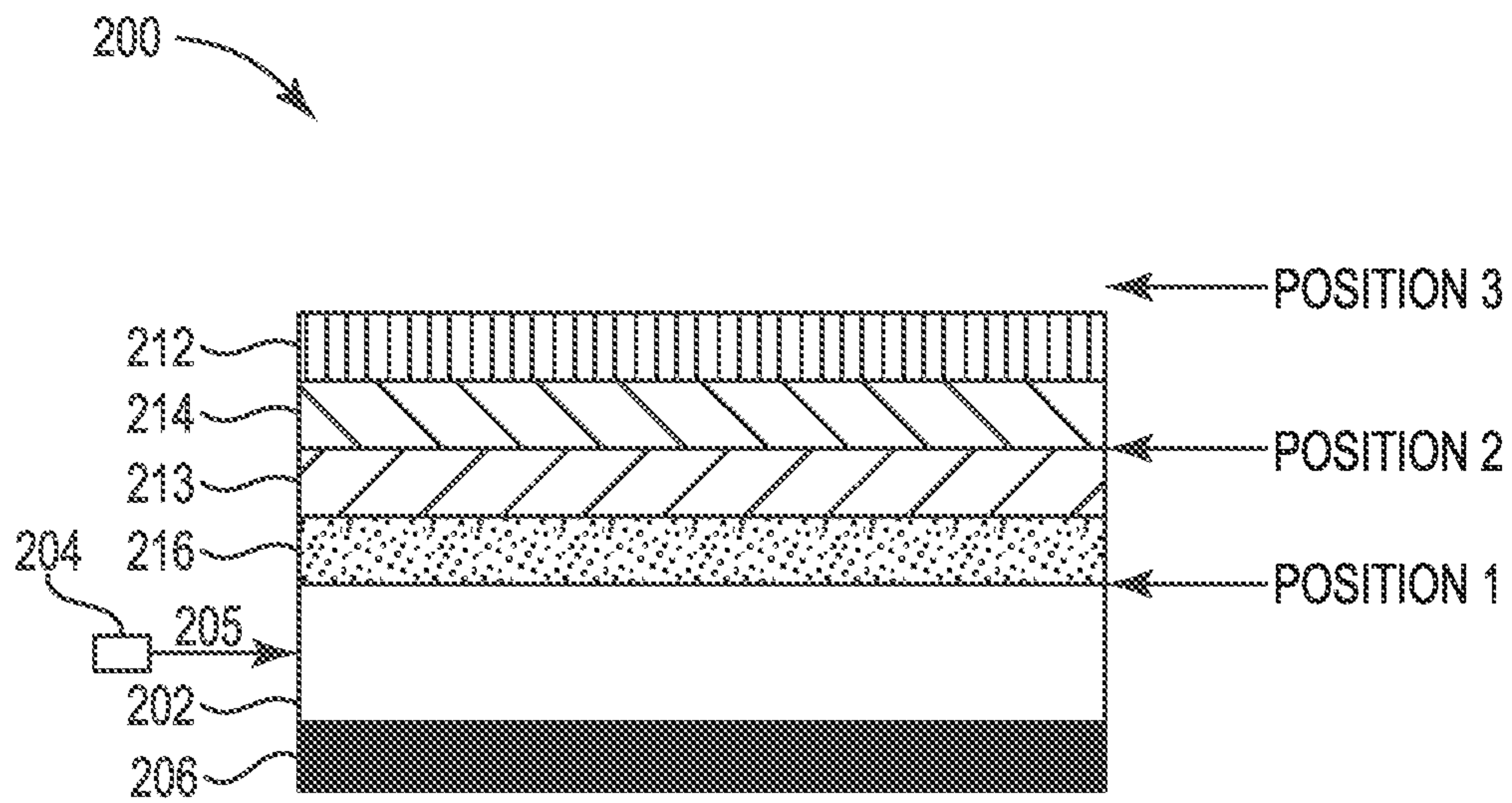


Fig. 2

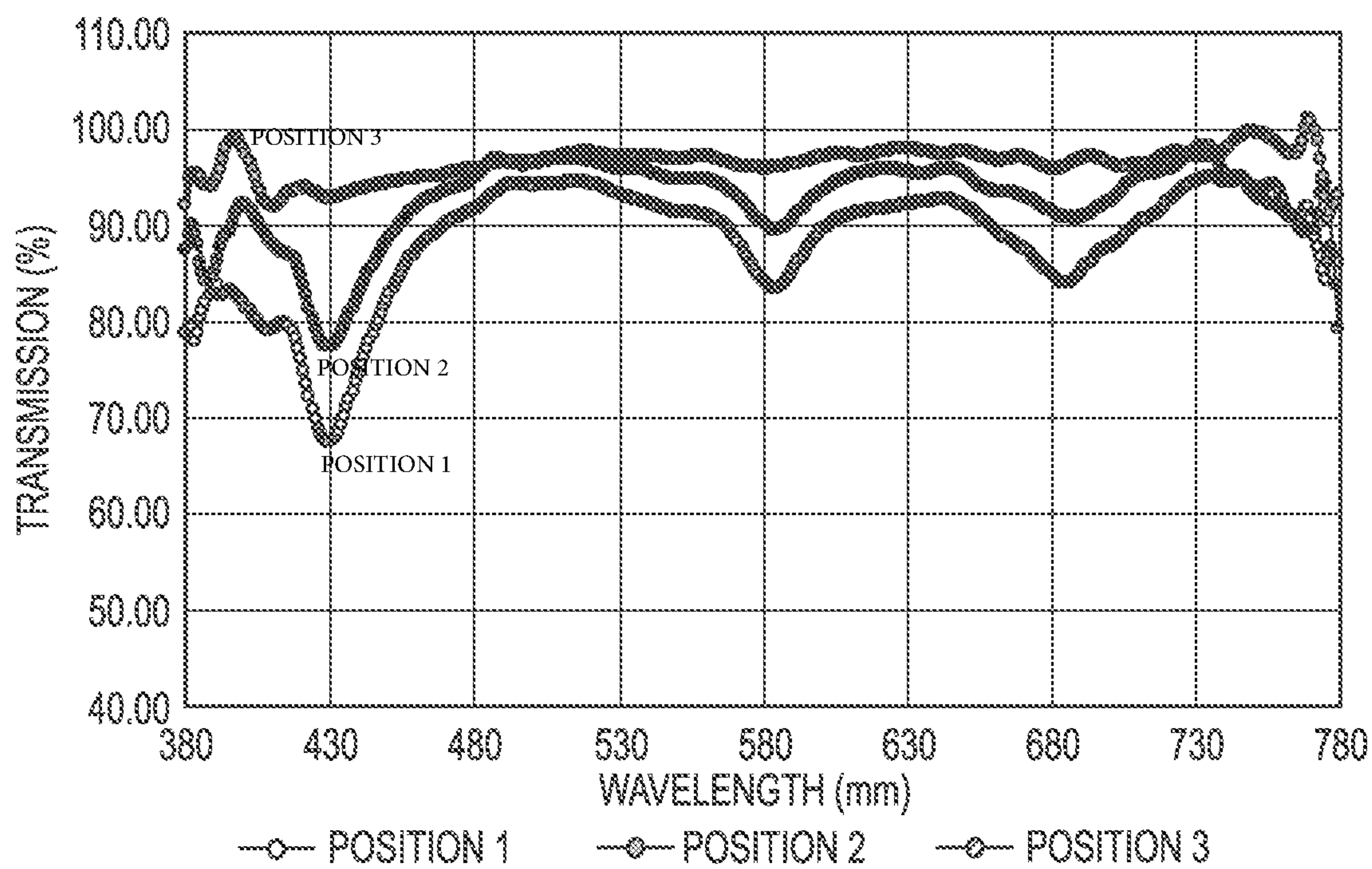


FIG. 3

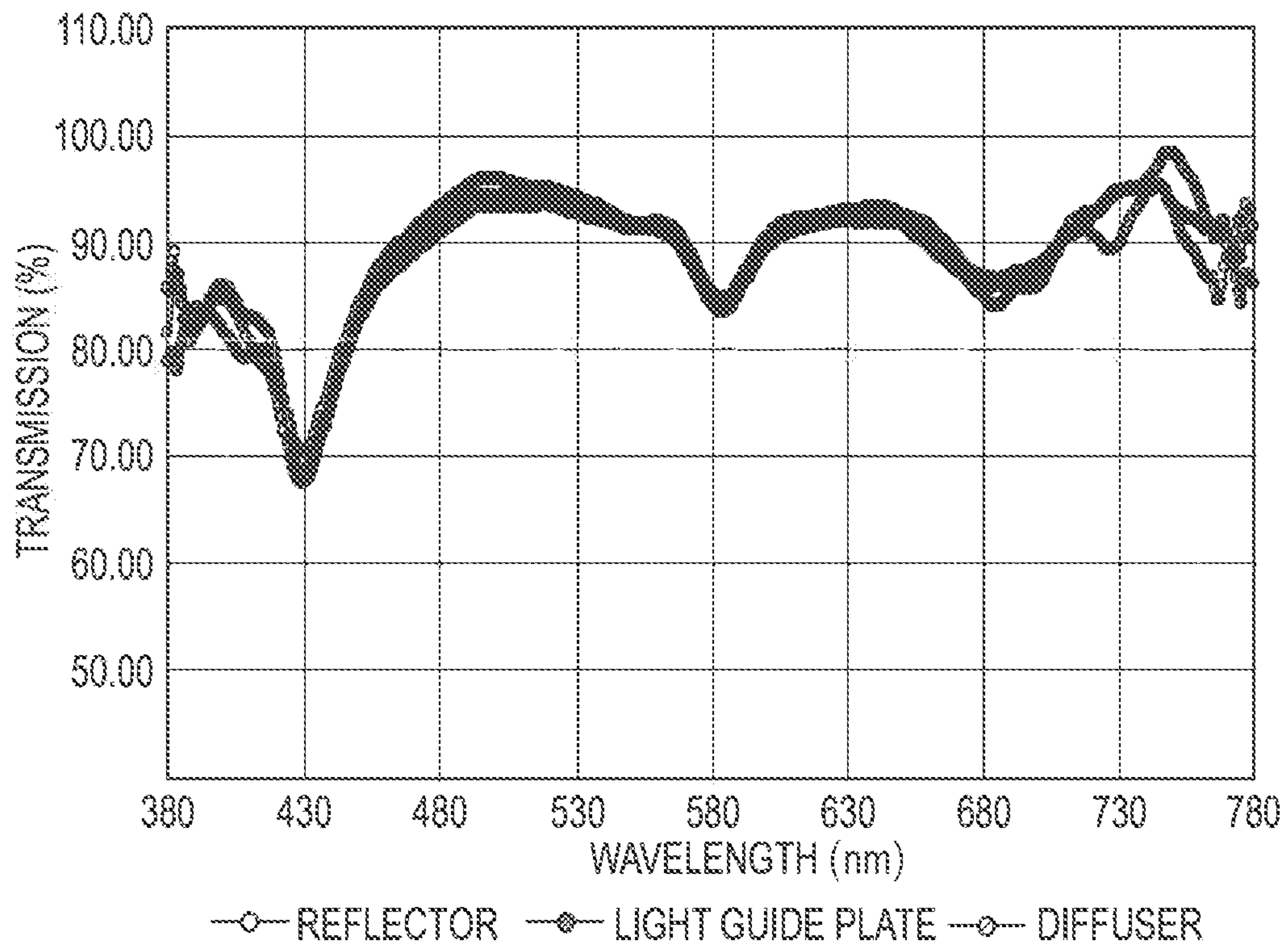


Fig. 4

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**BACKLIGHT UNIT WITH EMISSION
MODIFICATION****CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED
APPLICATIONS**

This application is a continuation-in-part of and claims the benefit of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 16/695,983, now allowed, filed Dec. 6, 2019 and titled LIGHT EMISSION MODIFICATION. This application is related to U.S. Nonprovisional patent application Ser. No. 14/719,604, filed May 22, 2015, and titled LIGHT EMISSION REDUCING FILM FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES, International Application under the Patent Cooperation Treaty No. PCT/US2015/032175, filed May 22, 2015 and titled LIGHT EMISSION REDUCING FILM FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES, International Application under the Patent Cooperation Treaty No. PCT/US2016/037457, filed Jun. 14, 2016 and titled LIGHT EMISSION REDUCING COMPOUNDS FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES, and any other U.S., International, or national phase patent applications stemming from the aforementioned applications. All references cited within are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety.

FIELD

The present disclosure relates to backlight modules for electronic display systems that include light conversion materials.

BACKGROUND

Handheld, tablet, computer, and other device displays have trended toward higher resolutions and truer color balance. While a variety of methods can be used to achieve resolution and color, many high-performance displays include LEDs that can result in high levels of blue within the output spectrum. Many of these devices are battery-powered and users, typically, desire long battery life. Longer battery life generally calls for low power consumption, as well as various means for light conservation. Frequently these displays generally have not prioritized eye safety as a design goal. A growing body of medical research is developing that indicates a “toxic” blue portion of the color spectrum can have adverse effects on the eye such that in the longer term, vision impairment can result. In addition, a new body of knowledge is showing that adverse effects can occur on the natural circadian rhythm of individuals from certain portions of the optical spectrum. The present disclosure describes materials and incorporation of these materials in a mobile, tablet or PC display that are highly selective in their ability to reduce exposure to harmful blue and UV light. These materials can be optimized as a function of wavelength to maintain color white point. Many of these materials reduce total light transmission. However, some of these materials, as described in the present disclosure, can convert or recycle harmful portions of the spectrum to optical wavelengths that are not harmful. In this manner, a balance of reduction of harmful color frequencies, maintenance of optical clarity, and maintenance of true white color balance can be achieved with minimal loss in display brightness. In light of recent medical findings, increasingly ubiquitous displays, and consumer demand for high quality in displays, systems of the present disclosure solve multiple needs in a unique way.

SUMMARY

To address eye safety, display systems are provided that incorporate materials into mobile, tablet, or personal com-

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puter displays that are can reduce exposure to harmful or toxic blue and ultraviolet light. The instant disclosure provides backlight modules (units) for display systems that include materials that can convert or recycle harmful portions of the visible electromagnetic spectrum into optical wavelengths that are less harmful while maintaining a balance of reduction in harmful color frequencies, maintenance of optical clarity, and maintenance of true white color balance with minimum loss in display brightness.

In one aspect, a backlight unit is disclosed that includes a light-emitting array. A reflector can be adjacent to the light-emitting array and a diffuser can be positioned opposite the reflector. A first brightness enhancing layer can be adjacent to the diffuser. The disclosed backlight unit can include an optical film having at least one light conversion material or at least one light absorbing material. In some embodiments, the at least one light conversion material can be used in combination with at least one light absorbing material to reduce hazardous blue light emissions between about 400 nm to about 500 nm. In some other embodiments, the disclosed backlight unit can include a light-guide plate having an edge, a bottom face, and a top face and the light-emitting array can be structured and configured to inject light into the light-guide plate. The disclosed backlight unit can also include a reflector adjacent to the bottom face of the light-guide plate, opposite the diffuser, a second brightness enhancing layer adjacent to the first brightness enhancing layer, and a polarizing filter adjacent to the second brightness enhancing layer.

In another aspect, a method of enhancing blue light absorption (about 400 nm to about 500 nm) in a backlight unit is disclosed that includes providing a backlight unit that includes an optical stack. The backlight unit can include a light-emitting array, a reflector adjacent to the light-emitting array, a diffuser opposite the reflector and a first brightness enhancing layer adjacent to the diffuser. The method further includes inserting an optical film having at least one light conversion layer or at least one light absorbing layer into the optical stack adjacent to the first brightness enhancing layer. In some embodiments, the at least one light conversion layer can be used in combination with the at least one light absorbing layer to reduce hazardous blue light emissions between about 400 nm and about 500 nm.

In yet another aspect, a method of enhancing blue light absorption (400 nm-500 nm) is disclosed that includes providing a backlight unit. The backlight unit can have an optical stack. The optical stack can include a light-guide plate having an edge, a bottom face, and a top face and a light-emitting array. The light-emitting array can be structured and configured to inject light into the light-guide plate. The optical stack can further include a reflector adjacent to the adjacent to the bottom face of the light-guide plate, a diffuser adjacent to the top face of the light-guide plate opposite the reflector, a first brightness enhancing layer adjacent to the diffuser, a second brightness enhancing layer adjacent to the first brightness enhancing layer, and a polarizing filter adjacent to the second brightness enhancing layer. The disclosed method also includes inserting an optical film having at least one light conversion layer or the at least one light absorbing layer into the optical stack.

In the present disclosure, the term, “light absorbing material” or “light absorbing layer” refers to an optical film that only absorbs light in a particular wavelength range;

the term, “light conversion material” or “light conversion layer” refers to an optical film that absorbs light at one wavelength range and reemits light at a higher wavelength range; and

the term, “optical film” refers to a layer of light absorbing material or light conversion material that may be neat or may be disposed upon a transparent carrier layer.

Features and advantages of the present disclosure will be more readily understood from the following detailed description which should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

The drawing is a schematic illustrations and is not intended to limit the scope of the invention in any way. The drawing is not necessarily to scale.

FIG. 1 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an exemplary display system according to this disclosure.

FIG. 2 is a schematic cross-sectional view of embodiments of a backlight unit according to the present disclosure that indicates positions where a light conversion (blue-filtering) layer can be inserted.

FIG. 3 are transmission spectra of different configurations of the embodiments shown in FIG. 2 with the blue-filtering layer in the different positions as indicated in FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 are transmission spectra of embodiments of the backlight unit shown in FIG. 2 with the blue-filtering layer in various positions below the diffuser.

In this application: the term, “adjacent” refers to layers that are either directly next to one another or are separated, at most, by one additional layer;

the terms, “blue light” or “toxic blue light” refer to light having wavelength ranges of about 400 nm to about 500 nm or about 415 nm to about 455 nm respectively;

the term, “disposed upon” refers to a layer that is either directly in contact with another layer or is adjacent to the other layer;

the term, “light-emitting diode array” refers to one or more light-emitting diodes in a matrix, usually two-dimensional; and

the term, “optical stack” refers to the layers in a backlight unit that emit light, are optically transparent to that light, or modify the properties of that light. These layers can be adjacent to one another.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Various embodiments will be described in detail with reference to the drawing. Reference to various embodiments does not limit the scope of the claims attached hereto. Additionally, any examples set forth in this specification are not intended to be limiting and merely set forth some of the many possible embodiments for the appended claims. It is understood that various omissions and substitutions of equivalents are contemplated as circumstances may suggest or render expedient, but these are intended to cover applications or embodiments without departing from the spirit or scope of the claims attached hereto. Also, it is to be understood that the phraseology and terminology used herein are for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting.

FIG. 1 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an example display system 100 with which systems of the present disclosure may be beneficially employed. Display system 100 may be used, for example, in a liquid crystal display (LCD) monitor, LCD-TV, handheld, tablet, laptop, or other

computing device. Display system 100 of FIG. 1 is merely exemplary, however, and the systems of the present disclosure are not limited to use with systems like or similar to system 100. The systems of the present disclosure may be beneficially employed in other varieties of displays systems that do not necessarily include liquid crystal display technology.

Display systems according to this disclosure can include backlight units that include optical stacks. The disclosed optical stacks can include light-emission systems such as light-emitting diodes, arrays of light-emitting diodes or other sources of substantially white light. These optical stacks can include layers of optical films that can pass the light transparently or can modify properties of the light passing therethrough. This can include reflection layers, diffusion layers, brightness enhancing layers (usually prismatic), and polarizing filters, to name a few. In some embodiments the optical stacks can include at least one optical film having at least one light conversion layer therewithin. Additionally, either that same at least one optical film can have light absorption layers thereon or therewithin. Alternatively, the optical stack can include at least one optical film having at least one light conversion material and at least one optical film having at least one light absorption disposed thereon or therewithin.

Display system 100 can include liquid crystal (LC) panel 150 and illumination assembly 101 positioned to provide illumination light to LC panel 150. LC panel 150 includes LC layer 152 disposed between panel plates 154. Plates 154 can include electrode structures and alignment layers on their inner surfaces for controlling the orientation of the liquid crystals in the LC layer 152. These electrode structures can be arranged so as to define LC panel pixels. A color filter can also be included with one or more of plates 152 for imposing color on the image displayed by LC panel 150.

LC panel 150 can be positioned between upper absorbing polarizer 156 and lower absorbing polarizer 158. Absorbing polarizers 156, 158 and LC panel 150 in combination can control the transmission of light from illumination assembly 101 to a viewer, the viewer generally being positioned toward the top of FIG. 1 and looking generally downward (relative to FIG. 1) at display system 100. Controller 104 can selectively activate pixels of LC layer 152 to form an image seen by the viewer.

One or more optional layers 157, can be provided over upper absorbing polarizer 156, for example, to provide optical function and/or mechanical and/or environmental protection to the display.

Illumination assembly 101 can include backlight 108 and one or more light management films 140 positioned between backlight 108 and LC panel 150. Backlight unit 108 can be used to collect light from light source 112 and redirect it toward the front of display system 100. Backlight 108 of display system 100 include light sources 112 that generate the light that illuminates LC panel 150. Light sources 112 can include any suitable lighting technology. In some embodiments, light sources 112 can be light-emitting diodes (LEDs), and in some cases, can be white LEDs. Backlight 108 as illustrated can be a “direct-lit” backlight in which an array of light sources 112 are located behind LC panel 150 substantially across much or all of the panel’s area. Backlight 108 as illustrated is merely schematic, however, and many other backlight configurations are possible. Some display systems, for example, can include a “side-lit” backlight with light sources (such as LEDs) located at one or

more sides of a light-guide that can distribute the light from the light sources substantially across much or all of the area of LC panel **150**.

In some embodiments, backlight **108** emits generally white light, and LC panel **150** is combined with a color filter matrix to form groups of multicolored pixels so that the displayed image is polychromatic.

Backlight **108** also includes reflective substrate **102** for reflecting light from light sources **112** propagating in a direction away from LC panel **150**. Reflective substrate **102** may also be useful for recycling light within display system **100**. In some embodiments, a light-emitting array is contemplated. Such a light-emitting array can include a matrix of arranged light-emitting diodes that can, in some embodiments, be embedded with a reflector or individual reflectors and a diffuser or diffusers therewithin. In these embodiments, the reflector and/or diffuser layers may not be separate layers in the optical stack but are part of the light-emitting array.

Arrangement **140** of light management films, which may also be referred to as a film stack, a backlight film stack, or a light management unit, can be positioned between backlight **108** and LC panel **150**. Light management films **140** can affect the illumination light propagating from backlight **108** so as to improve the operation of display system **100**. Light management unit **140** need not necessarily include all components as illustrated and described herein.

Arrangement **140** of light management films can include diffuser **120**. Diffuser **120** can diffuse the light received from light sources **112**, which can result in increased uniformity of the illumination light incident on LC panel **150**. Diffuser layer **120** may be any suitable diffuser film or plate.

Light management unit **140** can include reflective polarizer **142**. Light sources **112** typically produce unpolarized light, but lower absorbing polarizer **158** only transmits a single polarization state; therefore, about half of the light generated by light sources **112** is not transmitted through to LC layer **152**. Reflective polarizer **142**, however, may be used to reflect the light that would otherwise be absorbed in lower absorbing polarizer **158**. Consequently, this light may be recycled by reflection between reflective polarizer **142** and underlying display components, including reflective substrate **102**. At least some of the light reflected by reflective polarizer **142** may be depolarized and subsequently returned to reflective polarizer **142** in a polarization state that is transmitted through reflective polarizer **142** and lower absorbing polarizer **158** to LC layer **152**. In this manner, reflective polarizer **142** can be used to increase the fraction of light emitted by light sources **112** that reaches LC layer **152**, thereby providing a brighter display output. Any suitable type of reflective polarizer may be used for reflective polarizer **142**.

In some embodiments, polarization control layer **144** can be provided between diffuser plate **120** and reflective polarizer **142**. Polarization control layer **144** can be used to change the polarization of light that is reflected from reflective polarizer **142** so that an increased fraction of the recycled light is transmitted through reflective polarizer **142**.

Arrangement **140** of light management films can also include one or more brightness enhancing layers. A brightness enhancing layer can include a surface structure that redirects off-axis light in a direction closer to the axis of the display. This can increase the amount of light propagating on-axis through LC layer **152**, thus increasing the brightness of the image seen by the viewer. One example of a brightness enhancing layer is a prismatic brightness enhancing layer, which has a number of prismatic ridges that redirect

the illumination light through refraction and reflection. Examples of prismatic brightness enhancing layers include BEF prismatic films available from 3M Company. Other varieties of brightness enhancing layers can incorporate non-prismatic structures.

The exemplary embodiment illustrated in FIG. **1** shows first brightness enhancing layer **146a** disposed between reflective polarizer **142** and LC panel **150**. Prismatic brightness enhancing layer **146a** typically provides optical gain in one dimension. An optional second brightness enhancing layer **146b** may also be included in arrangement **140** of light management layers, having its prismatic structure oriented orthogonally to the prismatic structure of first brightness enhancing layer **146a**. Such a configuration provides an increase in the optical gain of display system **100** in two dimensions. In other exemplary embodiments, brightness enhancing layers **146a**, **146b** may be positioned between backlight **108** and reflective polarizer **142**.

The different layers in light management unit **140** can be free standing. In other embodiments, two or more of the layers in light management unit **140** may be laminated together. In other exemplary embodiments, light management unit **140** may include two or more subassemblies.

It is to be understood that as a schematic diagram, the components of display system **100** are not illustrated to scale, and generally are shown with greatly exaggerated thickness (along the up-down direction of FIG. **1**) compared to their lateral extent (along the left-right direction). Many elements of display system **100**, including (but not necessarily limited to) **102**, **120**, **142**, **144**, **146a**, **146b**, **152**, **154**, **156**, and **157** can extend in two dimensions generally orthogonal to their thickness (i.e., perpendicular to the plane of FIG. **1**) over an area approximately equal to a viewable area of the display, which may be referred to as a “display area.”

Returning to backlight **108**, in some embodiments light sources **112** can emit significant amounts of light in potentially harmful wavelength ranges, such as UV and blue light ranges (particularly below about 455 nm). In display system **100** that does not include systems of the present disclosure, significant amounts of such potentially harmful light can be emitted by display system **100** toward a user (upward relative to FIG. **1**). In this context a “significant” amount of light can mean an amount of light that may result in deleterious health effects for a display user. In view of this hazard, the present disclosure provides systems for reducing the amount of harmful blue light emitted from display systems such as system **100**.

In some approaches to mitigating the hazards of blue light emissions from electronic device displays, absorbing materials can be used to reduce the amount of light in particular wavelength ranges (such as UV and blue light wavelength ranges) that reach users’ eyes. Some of these solutions are described in U. S. patent application Ser. No. 14/719,604, filed May 22, 2015 and titled LIGHT EMISSION REDUCING FILM FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES, International Application under the Patent Cooperation Treaty No. PCT/US2015/032175, filed May 22, 2015 and titled LIGHT EMISSION REDUCING FILM FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES, and PCT Pat. Appl. Ser. No. PCT/US2016/037457, filed Jun. 14, 2016 and titled LIGHT EMISSION REDUCING COMPOUNDS FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES, which are incorporated by reference limited such that no subject matter is incorporated that is contrary to the explicit disclosure herein.

Approaches to blue light emission mitigation that are based upon absorption of light (or that otherwise remove

light), without subsequent emission of light in the visible region of the electromagnetic spectrum, can generally result in a decrease in the brightness (measured and/or perceived) of a display, as compared with an otherwise identical reference display without such absorption features. In some cases, to compensate for such an absorption-related brightness decrease, the power input to a display can be increased (relative to the power input to a reference display). Generally, increases in display power consumption can be undesirable, particularly in portable devices where they may negatively impact battery life.

In the present disclosure, systems for modifying the emission of light from displays are disclosed in which light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be employed away from light sources (such as light sources **112** of FIG. 1) of a display. Light conversion materials generally can absorb light in a first wavelength range and emit light in a second wavelength range (thus “converting” light from one wavelength range to another). Light absorbing materials only absorb light in one wavelength range. In the present disclosure, conversion from shorter wavelengths to longer wavelengths can be referred to as “upconversion” and conversion from longer wavelengths to shorter wavelengths can be referred to as “downconversion.” It should be recognized that these definitions may not be universal, however, and that other documents may define upconversion and downconversion oppositely (for example, some documents may define such terms relative to frequency, which is inversely related to wavelength).

Systems using light conversion materials away from light sources of a display can be used to absorb light in less useful or harmful wavelength ranges, such as UV and blue light ranges (particularly below about 455 nm) and re-emit light in more benign wavelength ranges (from a health perspective) that can be more useful, such as in green and/or red wavelength ranges. In some cases, light can be upconverted from shorter blue wavelengths (at or below about 455 nm) to longer blue wavelengths that can be less harmful and also useful for display illumination. In ways such as these, systems using light conversion materials away from light sources can modify the emission of light from display systems, relative to display systems not employing such light conversion materials.

In some examples, systems using light conversion materials or light absorbing materials away from light sources of a display can be employed with electronic device displays to mitigate blue light emissions such that the resulting display systems can achieve brightnesses comparable to reference displays without light conversion materials or light absorbing layers away from light sources, while consuming not more than 10% more energy than the reference displays.

Systems using light conversion materials or light absorbing materials away from light sources can improve the color balance of a display, compared to some known prior approaches to reducing blue light emissions from a display that do not employ light conversion materials away from light sources. Some such known prior approaches can reduce blue light emissions by absorbing or otherwise removing a portion of blue light from the spectrum, thus altering the spectral balance of the light emitted from the display. In systems of the present disclosure, in addition to reducing the amount of hazardous blue light emitted from an electronic display device, light conversion materials away from light sources can re-emit light that can contribute to, aid, or otherwise improve the color balance of light emitted from an electronic display device, as compared with an otherwise similar display with blue light mitigation that does

not include such light conversion materials. In some embodiments, display systems that include systems of the present disclosure incorporating light conversion materials or light absorbing materials away from light sources can maintain a D65 white point. In some embodiments, display systems that include systems of the present disclosure incorporating light conversion materials or light absorbing materials away from light sources can maintain a correlated color temperature (CCT) substantially the same as a reference display system without the blue light mitigation systems of the present disclosure.

In some embodiments of systems of the present disclosure, at least one light conversion material can be used in combination with at least one light absorbing material to reduce hazardous blue light emissions from, and improve or maintain the color balance of, a display system.

Systems of the present disclosure can include multiple light conversion materials or light absorbing materials that can absorb light from multiple wavelength ranges, including wavelength ranges other than UV or blue wavelength ranges.

In some embodiments, systems of the present disclosure can employ light conversion materials that absorb light from a wavelength range that is not considered to pose health risks. The absorption and emission of such a light conversion material can be employed, for example, to improve or otherwise contribute to the color balance of a display.

Any suitable light conversion materials can be used in systems of the present disclosure. Without limitation, employed light conversion materials can include:

- organic materials
- inorganic materials, which can be mined materials
- Raman-scattering materials
- Anti-Stokes materials
- materials known for other non-display applications, such as fingerprint dusting
- fluorescent pigments, such as those available from Day-Glo Color Corp (for example, DAYGLO A-594-5).
- Surprisingly, materials that are used commonly in applications requiring florescent behavior can be used in light filtering applications with great spectral efficiency.
- luminescent nanocrystals such as SUNSTONE Luminescent UCP Nanocrystals available from Sigma Aldrich Co., LLC.

In some embodiments of systems of the present disclosure, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be located in any suitable location away from light sources of the display. In some embodiments, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be included in, on, or with one or more films of light management films **140**, and or another film or films not illustrated in FIG. 1. In general, light conversion materials can re-emit light with different directionality and/or polarization compared with light absorbed by the light conversion materials. Accordingly, in some embodiments light conversion materials can be included below (relative to the orientation of FIG. 1) one or more of reflective polarizer **142** and/or brightness enhancement layers **146a**, **146b**, such that re-emitted light passes through films **142**, **146a**, and **146b** (if such films are present in the display system) before exiting the display toward a user. However, this is not limiting, and light conversion materials potentially can be located in, or, or with any component of light management films **140**.

In some embodiments of systems of the present disclosure, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be included in, on, or with a display layer between LC

layer **152** and a user, such as layer **157** of FIG. **1**. In some embodiments of systems of the present disclosure, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be included in, on, or with reflective substrate **102**.

In some embodiments of systems of the present disclosure, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be distributed substantially about an entire area corresponding to the display area of a display when included or provided in, on, or with a film of light management films **140**, reflector **102**, or another layer, such as layer **157**. In some such embodiments, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be distributed substantially uniformly over such an area.

Light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be included or provided in, on, or with a film of light management films **140**, reflector **102**, or another layer, such as layer **157**, in any suitable manner. In some embodiments, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be extruded or cast with a film. In some embodiments, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be coated onto a film. In some embodiments, the light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be included as a separate film layer or coated onto any of the layers that make up the backlight unit. In some embodiments, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be provided in or with an adhesive used to bond or laminate one or more layers of a display system, such as any suitable layers or films of display system **100**. Such an adhesive incorporating light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be substantially optically clear, exhibiting negligible scattering of light transmitted through the adhesive, other than redirection of light associated with absorption and re-emission by light conversion materials.

In some embodiments, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be solubly or insolubly distributed or dispersed throughout a material that is a component or precursor of any suitable film or layer of display system **100**, such as a polymer resin or an adhesive. In some embodiments, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can comprise nanoparticles, some which may be insoluble in polymers and commonly used solvents.

While homogeneous distribution may be more easily achieved in some systems with soluble light conversion materials, heterogeneous even distribution can be achieved with insoluble light conversion material with appropriate handling during manufacture.

In some embodiments, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be index-matched to materials or media into which they are incorporated, such that they can appear essentially optically "invisible" in wavelength ranges other than ranges in which they absorb and re-emit light, and that films or other materials incorporating the light conversion materials appear essentially optically clear. In some other embodiments, index differences between light conversion materials, light absorbing materials, and materials or media into which they are incorporated can be exploited for other optical functions, such as (but not necessarily limited to) diffusion and reflection. Index matching or index adjustment can be affected by making inorganic nanoparticles suitably small, and chemically coupling them to an organic adhesive. Likewise, the design of the organic molecule itself can tune index. An example, silicones tend toward relatively lower optical indices while complex hydrocarbons tend toward relatively higher optical indices. Organo-functional ligand ends can modify index in the adhesive.

Systems of the present disclosure incorporating light conversion materials or light absorbing materials can be

custom designed to retrofit into existing display systems, with selectable design parameters including choice of light conversion materials, light absorbing materials, and, also other non-converting blocking or filtering compounds. In other examples, new display systems can be designed that employ systems of the present disclosure incorporating light conversion materials. Through judicious choices of LEDs (and/or other light sources), light conversion materials, light absorbing materials, and other non-converting blocking or filtering compounds, and other optical films and devices, numerous combinations of approaches can be developed to provide displays that addresses eye health concerns while providing high display quality.

FIG. **2** is a schematic cross-sectional view of embodiments of a backlight unit according to the present disclosure that indicates positions where a light conversion or light absorbing (blue-filtering) layer can be inserted. Backlight unit **200** includes light-guide plate **202**. Typically, a light-guide plate is a transparent, or semi-transparent colorless, block of material (glass or polymer) that can conduct light. Light-guide plates can be made of many materials such as glass, polyacrylate (acrylic), polycarbonate, or other clear polymers. Light-emitting diode array **204**, arranged in a strip as a light source, can be arranged so that light **205** can enter backlight unit **200** through one edge of light-guide plate **202**. Alternatively, as shown in FIG. **1**, light-emitting diode array **204** can be located below light-guide plate **202**. Light-guide plate **202** can have reflector **206** adjacent to it on one or more sides in order to direct the light from light-emitting diode array **204** upward (as shown in FIG. **2**) and through backlight unit **200**. Additionally, light in backlight unit **200** can distribute itself uniformly through light-guide plate **202** through reflections from reflector **206** and internal reflections on the edges of light-guide plate **202** due to the refractive index difference between light-guide plate and air as well as reflection from the reflector and portions of the backlight unit yet to be described. The light-guide plate can be placed between a reflector layer between the reflector and the diffuser. The impact of this type of construction (illustrated in FIGS. **1** and **2**) redirects light from the light source at the edge of a display screen uniformly across the display surface. The uniformity of the light distribution and the efficiency of the light collection (amount of light reaching the display surface vs. amount of light from the light source injected into the light-guide plate) are related to the efficiency of the light-guide plate, the reflector layer, and the diffuser layer or layers.

Diffuser **216** can be disposed adjacent to light-guide plate **202** as shown in FIG. **2**. Diffuser **201** can evenly distribute light and eliminate bright spots. Diffusers can come in types, for example, such as holographic, white diffusing glass, and ground glass. Diffusers can be semi-opaque and can reflect light in many different directions. First brightness enhancing layer **213** and second brightness enhancing layer **214** can be prismatic brightness enhancing films. Prismatic brightness enhancing films are described earlier in this disclosure. Adjacent to second brightness enhancing layer **214** can be one or more polarizing filters **214** that lets light of a specific polarization pass through while blocking light waves of other polarizations. In some embodiments, polarizing filters can help reduce reflections and glare by filtering out light that has become polarized due to reflection from non-metallic surfaces. The goal of backlight unit **200** is to distribute light uniformly across the two-dimensional plane of light-guide plate **202**, thus providing light to display images across the entirety of the display.

The disclosed backlight unit with emission modification also includes an optical film, the optical film comprising at least one light conversion material or at least one light absorbing material or both. The light conversion material or light absorbing material can absorb light in a first wavelength range and reemit light in a second wavelength range having a higher wavelength. In the instant disclosure, light conversion materials or light absorbing materials are contemplated that absorb blue light, particularly toxic blue light. Useful light conversion materials and light absorbing materials are described, for example, in applicants' co-owned U.S. patent application Ser. No. 15/813,010, currently allowed, filed Nov. 14, 2017 and entitled LIGHT EMISSION REDUCING COMPOUNDS FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

Referring again to FIG. 2, when light 205 is injected into light-guide plate 205, it can reflect within light-guide plate 202, from reflector 206, from diffuser 216, and from prismatic brightness enhancing layers 213 and 214. Light 205 will necessarily eventually pass through the layers of backlight unit 200 multiple times and thus be distributed across the full area of a display located above the top layer of backlight unit 200. This can create an opportunity to amplify the impact of a selective light conversion material or light absorbing material that filters out blue or toxic blue light or any other film or layer that can modify the spectrum. These selective light-conversion material or light absorbing material can be included as a separate film or can be coated onto any of the layers that make up the disclosed backlight unit.

In some embodiments, light-conversion materials (filters) placed in various locations in the backlight unit have been shown to have up to a ten to twelve times amplification of absorption which greatly increases the efficiency of selective light conversion material or light absorbing material that can, for example, filter out blue or toxic blue light.

FIG. 3 shows the effective transmittance of the light-conversion or absorbing material (blue-light filtering layer) across the visible spectrum as a function of where the light conversion material or light conversion material is placed within the display backlight. The effective transmittance is calculated by dividing the emission from the display with the light conversion material or light absorbing material by the emission of the display without the light conversion material or light absorbing material. The different spectra shown in FIG. 3 illustrate the impact of the light conversion or light absorbing material layer when placed at different locations (positions) in the display—outside of and within the backlight unit.

FIG. 3 are transmission spectra of different configurations of the embodiments shown in FIG. 2 with the light conversion or light absorbing material (blue-filtering) layer in the different positions as indicated in FIG. 2. They show the transmission spectra of a typical backlight display configuration (FIG. 2) with a layer of light conversion or light absorbing material positioned in three different places in the backlight filter. In POSITION 1, the light conversion or light absorbing material was between light-guide plate 202 and diffuser 216. In POSITION 2, the light conversion or light absorbing material was between first prismatic brightness enhancing film 213 and second prismatic brightness enhancing film 214. In POSITION 3, the light-conversion material or light absorbing layer was placed on top of the polarizer (between the backlight unit 200 and any liquid crystal imaging layers being illuminated by backlight unit 200). FIG. 1 is a schematic that shows a liquid crystal electronic imaging device on top of the backlight as disclosed above. When the light conversion or light absorbing material layer

was positioned above the polarizer in POSITION 3 (top curve in FIG. 3) the transmission spectrum shows very little absorption and reemission of light from the light-conversion material layer. The spectral line for POSITION 3 is relatively flat with few absorptions from the light-conversion material layer.

When the same light-conversion or light absorbing material layer was placed in POSITION 2 between the first prismatic brightness enhancing layer and the second prismatic brightness enhancing layer, the effect of the light-conversion or light absorbing material layer is shown in the middle curve of FIG. 3. The transmission of light in the blue region of the spectrum (400 nm-500 nm) is decreased by about 16%. The light-conversion material layer also has color balancing (color correction) ingredients that also decrease the red region of the spectrum (650 nm-700 nm) and also in the yellow portion of the spectrum (550 nm-615 nm).

When the same light-conversion or light absorbing material layer was positioned between the light-guide plate and the diffuser layer as shown in POSITION 1 (bottom curve of FIG. 3), the absorption of the same film was enhanced and the transmission of light in the blue region of the spectrum (400 nm-500 nm) is decreased by about 28%. In a separate experiment, the transmittance of the light-conversion or light absorbing layer (400 nm-500 nm) was calculated by subtraction of the transmittance of the backlight display without the light-conversion layer. The results showed that it would take about 12 simulated layers of the film to produce the absorbance shown in FIG. 3 POSITION 1.

FIG. 4 are transmission spectra of embodiments of the backlight unit shown in FIG. 2 with the light-conversion layer in various positions in the backlight below the diffuser. In FIG. 4, the light-conversion layer was coated on a poly(ethylene terephthalate) (PET) film which was placed on the reflector, on the light-guide plate, and on the diffuser layer. The results show that the light conversion or light absorbing layer produces absorption amplification if it is located anywhere below the prismatic brightness enhancing layers of the backlight. Although not wishing to be bound by theory, it is observed that when the light conversion or light absorbing layer is located within the backlight unit (below the prismatic brightness enhancing layer and polarizing layer) that absorption may be maximized due to the multiple internal reflections within the backlight unit.

FIG. 4 shows three effective transmission curves of three different configurations of a backlight stack as illustrated in FIG. 2. In FIG. 4, one curve is an absorption curve of the backlight unit shown in FIG. 2 with the light-conversion on PET layer positioned above the reflector and under the light-guide plate. A second absorption curve is a measurement of the spectrum of the same backlight unit with a light absorbing material on PET layer on top of the light-guide plate. The third absorption curve is the spectrum of the same backlight unit with the light-conversion on PET layer between the light-guide plate and the diffuser. It is the same as POSITION 1 on FIG. 2. All three curves lie essentially on top of one another showing that having the light absorbing material layer located in any position below the prismatic brightness enhancing film does not substantially change the absorption and that the absorption of the backlight unit for all three configurations show the substantially the same amount of amplification of absorption with respect to the light absorbing material on top of the backlight unit.

While embodiments of the invention have been illustrated and described, it will also be apparent that various modifications can be made without departing from the scope of the

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invention. It is also contemplated that various combinations or sub combinations of the specific features and aspects of the disclosed embodiments can be combined with or substituted for one another in order to form varying modes of the invention. Accordingly, it is not intended that the invention be limited, except as by the appended claims. All references cited within are herein incorporated by reference in their entirety.

What is claimed is:

1. A backlight unit comprising:

a light-emitting array;

a reflector adjacent to the light-emitting array;

a diffuser opposite the reflector;

a first brightness enhancing layer adjacent to the diffuser;

a second brightness enhancing layer adjacent to the first

brightness enhancing layer; a polarizing filter adjacent

to the first brightness enhancing layer, wherein the

reflector is adjacent to the bottom face of the light-

guide plate, opposite the diffuser, and

an optical film in the backlight unit comprising at least

one light conversion material or at least one light

absorbing material,

wherein the at least one light conversion material or at least

one light absorbing material is structured and configured to

reduce hazardous blue light emissions between about 400

nm to about 500 nm.

2. A backlight unit according to claim 1, further compris-

ing a light guide plate having an edge, a bottom face, and a

top face adjacent the light-emitting array,

wherein the light-emitting array is structured and configured

to inject light emitted from the array into one of the faces of

the light-guide plate.

3. A backlight unit according to claim 1, wherein the

optical film is disposed between the first brightness enhanc-

ing layer and the second brightness enhancing layer.

4. A backlight unit according to claim 2, wherein the

optical film is disposed between the top face of the light-

guide plate and the diffuser.

5. A backlight unit according to claim 2, wherein the

optical film is disposed between the reflector and the bottom

face of the light-guide plate.

6. A backlight unit according to claim 1, wherein the

light-emitting array comprises light-emitting diodes.

7. A backlight unit according to claim 1, wherein the at

least one light conversion material or the at least one light

absorbing material is structured and configured to maintain

the color balance of the unit.

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8. A method of enhancing blue light absorption (400 nm-500 nm) in a backlight unit comprising:

providing a backlight unit that includes an optical stack, wherein the optical stack comprises:

a light-emitting array;

a reflector adjacent to the light-emitting array;

a diffuser opposite the reflector;

a first brightness enhancing layer adjacent to the dif-

fuser; a second brightness enhancing layer adjacent

to the first brightness enhancing layer; a polarizing

filter adjacent to the second brightness enhancing

layer, wherein the reflector is adjacent to the bottom

face of the light-guide plate, opposite the diffuser,

and

inserting an optical film having at least one light conver-

sion layer and at least one light absorbing layer adja-

cent to the first brightness enhancing layer into the

optical stack,

wherein the at least one light conversion layer is used in

combination with the at least one light absorbing layer to

reduce hazardous blue light emissions from the backlight

unit at wavelengths between about 400 nm to about 500 nm.

9. A method of enhancing blue light absorption (400

nm-500 nm) in a backlight unit according to claim 8,

wherein the backlight unit further comprises:

a light-guide plate having an edge, a bottom face, and a

top face,

wherein the light-emitting array is structured and configured

to inject light into the light-guide plate.

10. A method of enhancing blue light absorption (400

nm-500 nm) in a backlight unit according to claim 9,

wherein the optical film is inserted between the first bright-

ness enhancing layer and the second brightness enhancing

layer.

11. A method of enhancing blue light absorption (400

nm-500 nm) in a backlight unit according to claim 9,

wherein the optical film is inserted between the reflector and

the bottom face of the light-guide plate.

12. A method of enhancing blue light absorption (400

nm-500 nm) in a backlight unit according to claim 9,

wherein the optical film is inserted between the top face of

the light-guide plate and the diffuser.

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